

First published in 1949, Felix is released weekly during term time and is distributed around Imperial's London campuses. All students, staff, and alumni are welcome to contribute to the paper.



KEEP THE CAT FREE | SINCE 1949

# Rent hikes draw ire of students, staff, and alumni.

**Editor-in-Chief**  
**MOHAMMAD MAJLISI**

Imperial College has decided on the final rent increases for the next three academic years without Union endorsement. Following weeks of negotiation with Officer Trustees last November, the College has finalised on an increase of 8.7%, 7.9%, and 7.6% for the 2025/26, 2026/27, and 2027/28 academic years, despite the Union holding the position that such increases “are too high”. The hikes mean students will pay 26.2% more for Imperial-owned student accommodation by 2027.

In a bid to mitigate the increases, IC Union published an open letter calling for Imperial to limit rent increases at a rate of Consumer Price Index (CPI) + 1%, “ensuring a fair and transparent rent-setting process”, a commitment towards providing a range of “affordable rooms”, and using summer income to subsidise student rent. Halls are also let out privately during the summer break, supplementing the income of the university.

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**“I would not have considered Imperial as an option when applying for university.”**

Brendan Foster for Imperial College London

# No sign of divestment following investment forum

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At *Felix*, we believe that it is always in the interest of the students to be in the know. Transparency in the workings of the College and the work of your student representatives is key. Therefore we, the *Felix* Editors, on behalf of the team promise that:

We will, to the best of our ability, tell you the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

We will keep your confidence and will only publish something you say to us if you have explicitly said that we can.

We will work to expose unfairness and discrimination in all forms that it takes at the College.

We will treat fairly any article sent to us, regardless of point of view, and do our best to work with you to prepare it for publication.

Signed by:  
**MOHAMMAD MAJLISI**  
Editor-in-Chief

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## EDITORIAL

# Two thousand and twenty-five

### Editor-in-Chief

### MOHAMMAD MAJLISI

A new year and term begin at Imperial, and a lot has been going on. The College has finalised its rent increases for the next three years, despite the Union refusing to endorse or agree with the final increases of 8.7%, 7.9%, and 7.6% annually until the end of the 2027/28 academic year. In the same time period inflation will only increase by approximately 2% year on year according to projections by the International Monetary Fund, as the UK has ground to a halt in terms of growth. The move, which was wholly unpopular with the student body, reaching over 1,000 signatures on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> December despite the open letter being sent out on the last day of term, and on a December weekend when students would be travelling and removed from engaging with most, if any, university related issues. Very few issues have caused the student body to react with such swiftness. The only exception I can think of is another open letter calling on the College to issue a “point blank condemnation” of the bombing of health facilities, the killing of medics, journalists and UN officials, and Israel’s “illegal blockade” of the Gaza Strip. Whilst there are no material affects, apart from incomingw students having to pay a lot more for student housing, I think the rent changes in particular follow the trend where the powers that be, comprised of gen-X to boomer British nationals, who have had it a lot easier materially, with either much cheaper tuition, greater welfare support, or even not dealing with dwindling public services now on the brink of collapse, and a functional job market, pulling the ladder above them. Reports in the *Financial Times* of the lack of affordable housing, reports in *The Times* of a much tougher job market, make the UK a much less desirable place to live. For people my age, or older, there is an increasing resentment towards the state’s lack of resources allocated towards us, despite young professionals, many of whom are Imperial graduates, paying a much higher tax burden, either through direct income tax, national insurance that funds a pensions service we will in all likelihood never have, or through the

indirect nature of the graduate loan. The feeling is that, regardless of how much one plays by the rules, one works towards doing things the “right way”, there is no benefit, and the institutions that are meant to keep order do the opposite and subvert their role to drain you of your money, time, and life. Why pay to live in halls when you could find cheaper accommodation privately and put yourself at greater risk? Why bother trying to go to a good university if the experience is much more atomised, commercialised, and clearly catered towards providing a certificate rather than actually educating you to degree level? Why try to compete in a hostile job market, on compressed pay that will soon mean that earning the minimum wage will require students on plan five loans to pay

### New Years

A friend of mine told me about a game he plays with his friends from back home. Every year, they award each other points for the wins and losses they have in the year; wins mean significant achievements, such as meeting each other, entering relationships, or finishing their degrees. Most years ended with all the players ending in negative points, signifying that more often than not, one would have to “take the L” as the kids say. It was a good year for my friend, they were only on -70 points so far.

Vision boards are in vogue, with several other friends trying to manifest hopes and successes via Pinterest. One of my friends has her phone background set to this year’s vision board, another has it near her bed so she can look upon it as she lies down. I am tempted to make one, if only to show how curated and cool my Pinterest feed is (it’s mostly Joe Camel ads from the 1990s and vintage American workwear).

I noticed eating 12 grapes under a table at midnight was a common tradition. To find true love or something, according to my TikTok feed filled with people stuffing grapes. I also have snus reviews on offer, the Lily-Rose Depp and 070 Shake SoHo monologue, and for some strange reason, deaths of TV soap characters by year. I haven’t watched a TV show in years, but I do know Dot Branning died in 2020 in her sleep.

Resolutions are a thing of the past. It’s too cliché, you

can do what you want whenever you want, and that includes self-improvement. So is thinking it’s going to be “your year”. I’ve seen the evolution of the meme transform from millennial sincerity to sardonic, badly edited gen z irony, fizzling out to nothing. Still, a sense of calmness about the whole ideal. This year promises nothing, there is no good to be found as everything around us decays. But without those false expectations, without something to look forward to, this vast empty openness of days not yet lived, lies something that reminds me of the line from *Gatsby*, the feeling that one “could suck on the pap of life, gulp down the incomparable milk of wonder.”

NEWS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1...

As of 9th January, 1,102 students, staff, alumni, and concerned members of the public have signed the letter calling for Imperial to reconsider the price changes. The letter, published online on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December, the last day of Autumn term, achieved 500 signatures by midnight, and was shared widely across the weekend. Included in the letter were testimonials by students discussing how the price hike may impact themselves, or future students. Among the testimonials shared by the Union was one from a prospective student, who said the rent hike “is changing my mind on Imperial. It does not seem possible now as it is my dream uni.” Students from lower income backgrounds discussed how such an increase would impact their lives. One student who remained in Imperial accommodation after their first year, questioned “whether [they] can afford [their]” final years of study” should prices increase.

Despite the increase in rent prices, some concessions have been granted by the College. In a blog post on the Union website published on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December, the Officer Trustees, who were part of negotiations, explained how the College had agreed to “freeze rents for all rooms in the “affordable category””, and coupling students eligible for the Imperial bursary to be guaranteed a room in the affordable range should they apply for one.

Rents are divided into three categories: affordable

rents are capped at 55% of the maximum student maintenance loan, peer rents are rents comparable to other student halls provided by competing universities, and market rents set at a 10% discount to the rental sector.

The Union is also negotiating for the introduction of longer 50- week tenancies for students who may need to stay in London during the summer break.

An Imperial College London spokesperson said: “We are committed to offering a high-quality undergraduate halls experience that delivers good value for money in London. We are also supporting students from lower socio-economic backgrounds, ensuring they can study and thrive at Imperial. We offer one of the most competitively priced accommodation packages for undergraduates in London, alongside one of the most generous bursary schemes in the sector.

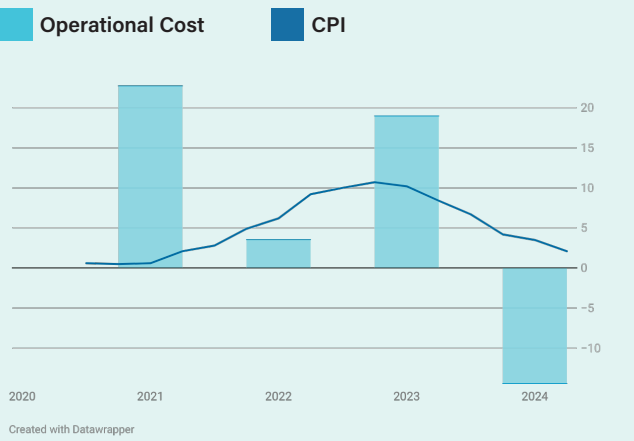
“Imperial aims to operate its undergraduate halls on a financially sustainable, break-even basis, which means rental income must cover the cost of delivering and maintaining the halls, to avoid diverting resources from other activities.

“While the framework will introduce an increase in average rent, there will be a reduction of up to 24% for 589 bedspaces in South Kensington and Paddington. Rents have been reduced in these central London locations to provide increased access for students from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

“We are grateful to ICU representatives for their

Cost of business

YoY increase of Imperial’s operational cost to run student halls compared to CPI inflation (%)



Source: Imperial College London / Office for National Statistics

constructive engagement with the consultation process.”

Although inflation is estimated to remain at 2% per annum across 2025– 2028, according to predictions by the International Monetary Fund, the steep inflation rise in 2022 and 2023, has resulted in operational costs increasing.

Imperial academics recognised in New Year Honours

Editor-in-Chief  
MOHAMMAD MAJLISI

Several academics at Imperial have been regnoised for their services towards their fields in the 2025 New Year Honours list.

Professor Robert J Wilkinson (Department of Infectious Diseases) received an OBE for services to infectious disease research. Professor Wilkinson’s research has focused on tuberculosis, particularly with regards to HIV-1 infection. He is also a Principal Group Leader at the Francis Crick Institute and has an Honorary Professorship at the University of Cape Town. He has co-authored around 456 articles and reviews on infectious diseases.

Professor Daniel M Davis (Head of the Department of Life Sciences and Professor of Immunology) received an MBE for services towards science communication. He has written several books for the general audience, including The Compatibility Gene and and The Secret Body. He has appeared in print, radio and TV, contributing to Scientific American, New Scientist and The Infinite Monkey Cage.

Professor Frank Kelly (Humphrey Battcock Chair in Community Health and Policy) has received a CBE for services to air pollution and human health. His work has spanned all aspects of air pollution research. He has led studies on the urban airshed within London and has researched the impact of the Congestion Charging Zone and the Ultra Low Emission Zone in London.

Humphrey Battcock, the eponymous philanthropist also recieved a CBE for his services towards ending homeless and towards community health.

Also included in the honours are Dr Shehan Het-tiaratchy (Professor of Practice in the Department of Bioengineering), who received an OBE for services to the UK’s emergency health response overseas.

Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz, a member of Col-lege Council, and former Deputy Rector, was made a Knight Grand Cross for his services to cancer re-search, medicine, and to charities.



## Fill out the Sex Survey:



## Heaven reopens after Council hearing

Editor-in-Chief

MOHAMMAD MAJLISI

**W**estminster Licensing Committee have allowed popular gay nightclub, Heaven to reopen, following a hearing on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December. Several new conditions for licensing have been implemented including final entry at 3am, a ban on queue drinking, and changes to its security.

The club had its license suspended for 28 days following an alleged rape committed by a security guard in the vicinity of the venue in November. The security guard has since been arrested and charged with rape and is now in remand in prison.

A spokesperson for Westminster Council said: “Having considered all of the evidence presented by Heaven’s management, residents and the Metropolitan Police, the council’s licensing committee have agreed to lift the suspension of the venue’s licence.

“The committee was satisfied that Heaven’s operators have demonstrated significant improvements to security and stated that appropriate management plans are now in place for the venue to operate safely.”

# No sign of divestment following investment forum

## Staff and students met with Provost and COO to discuss Imperial’s fossil fuel and arms company investments.

Editor-in-Chief

MOHAMMAD MAJLISI

**S**tudents and staff questioned Imperial College’s investment strategy in an open forum on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> January. College Provost, Ian Walmsley, and Chief Operating Officer, Robert Kerse, answered questions from the Imperial community, with ICU President Camille Boutrolle acting as moderator for the event.

Questions were both pre-submitted, so that the members of senior management could prepare answers and asked live at the forum. The vast majority of questions asked were regarding Imperial’s investments in arms companies, or companies that, according to research completed by pro-Palestinian activists, may be “complicit” in alleged war crimes committed by the Israel Defense Forces in the Gaza Strip since the conflict be-

gan on October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The questions highlighted that 26% of direct holdings, amounting to 24 million pounds of capital were invested in companies that may fit into this category, with COO Robert Kerse confirming that there is “no roadmap towards divestment in any of those companies”.

Audience members asked if the College believed that they could understand accusations of complicity by either investing in or having research placements with arms companies. The provost said Imperial did not necessarily have to agree with the actions of any companies it invested in, and that he could not see any “equivalence” in Imperial’s financial actions.

Questions about Imperial’s social responsibility were also asked, regarding the condemnation of any crimes against humanity or war crimes. Imperial stated that it did not comment on geopolitical matters, although a member of the

audience pointed out that in 2022, both the provost, and former president Alice Gast had issued a statement that stated Imperial “condemn[ed] the Russian Federation’s unjustified and inhumane invasion.” Professor Walmsley also pointed out the statements Imperial had released in 2023 and 2024, as well as referring to legal sanctions the UK government had placed on Russian investments and research agreements following its invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

Discussions around Imperial’s green policy were also highlighted. As part of Imperial’s green commitments, the Zero Index policy had been enacted last year.

Robert Kerse also confirmed there are “no plans” to integrate cryptocurrency investments, but would be open to hearing any research that suggests cryptocurrency may be a sustainable and worthwhile investment.



Palickap for Wikimedia Commons, CC-BY-SA 4.0

## SCIENCE

# Earth's oldest fossil

Science writer Doyeon Myeong discusses the Brasier–Schopf debate on the origin of Earth's oldest fossil.

Science Writer  
DOYEON MYEONG

The presence of life on Earth is perhaps the most unique aspect of the planet. However, studying how this marvel came to be can prove controversial, as life's earliest forms are known only from fossils, which weather over time. Consequently, it is of great interest to palaeontologists to seek out the oldest fossils, pushing the boundaries of our understanding.

One key attempt to do this occurred between two renowned palaeontologists: Professor James William Schopf (UCLA) and Professor Martin David Brasier (University of Oxford).

In 1993 Schopf published a paper about some microfossils he had found in Early Archaean rocks, which he claimed were the oldest fossils to date. The microfossils were discovered in volcanic sedimentary rock deposited 3–3.5 billion years ago. Their structure is similar to that of “cellularly preserved filamentous microbes”.

In this paper, Schopf established five criteria for validating these microfossils as the oldest:

1. They should occur in rocks of pre-Archaean age, the geological eon that spans from 4.5 to 2 billion years ago;
2. They should be defined as Archaean in age;
3. They must not have been removed from their initial site of deposition;
4. They must have been deposited with other sediments that form the enclosing rock;

5. It must be confirmed that they are of biological origin.

Schopf's fossils were found in the Early Archaean Apex Chert, a region composed of rock deposited around 3,465 million years ago. They were found among pillow lava, basalt, and komatiite, which were determined to be pre-Archaean using U–Pb zircon analysis (a radiometric dating technique using uranium and lead isotopes in zircon), satisfying the both first and second criterion.

Schopf then compared the geological layering of the fossil-containing unit to adjacent layers, confirming that the fossil-bearing rock was a primary deposit, rather than a later intrusion. The fossil was also shown to be contained in its original sedimentary deposit, attesting to its ancient origin. Finally, owing to the microfossils' similarity to known prokaryotes, their biological origin was straightforward to confirm, leading Schopf to conclude that these fossils were indeed the oldest ever found: around 3,465 million years old.

## Brasier's Opposition

Brasier had a different opinion. In 2002, he published the paper “Questioning the evidence for Earth's oldest fossils”. Employing geochemical techniques, he argued that the microfossils Schopf claimed to have discovered were actually mineral structures composed of amorphous graphite.

Brasier began by stating that the al-

leged microfossils did not match what would be expected of indigenous organisms in the discovery area. Then, by analysing site rocks, he found that the chert had not been deposited successively on other units, thereby refuting Schopf's third criterion. Moreover, through high-resolution Raman spectroscopy, Brasier discovered that the composition of the groundmass was similar to that of the purported micro-

sils” were inconsistent with prokaryotic fossils, describing them as “isolated, irregularly distributed, and randomly oriented”. These features, among others, led Brasier to conclude that the “microfossils” Schopf had found were nothing more than unusual minerals.

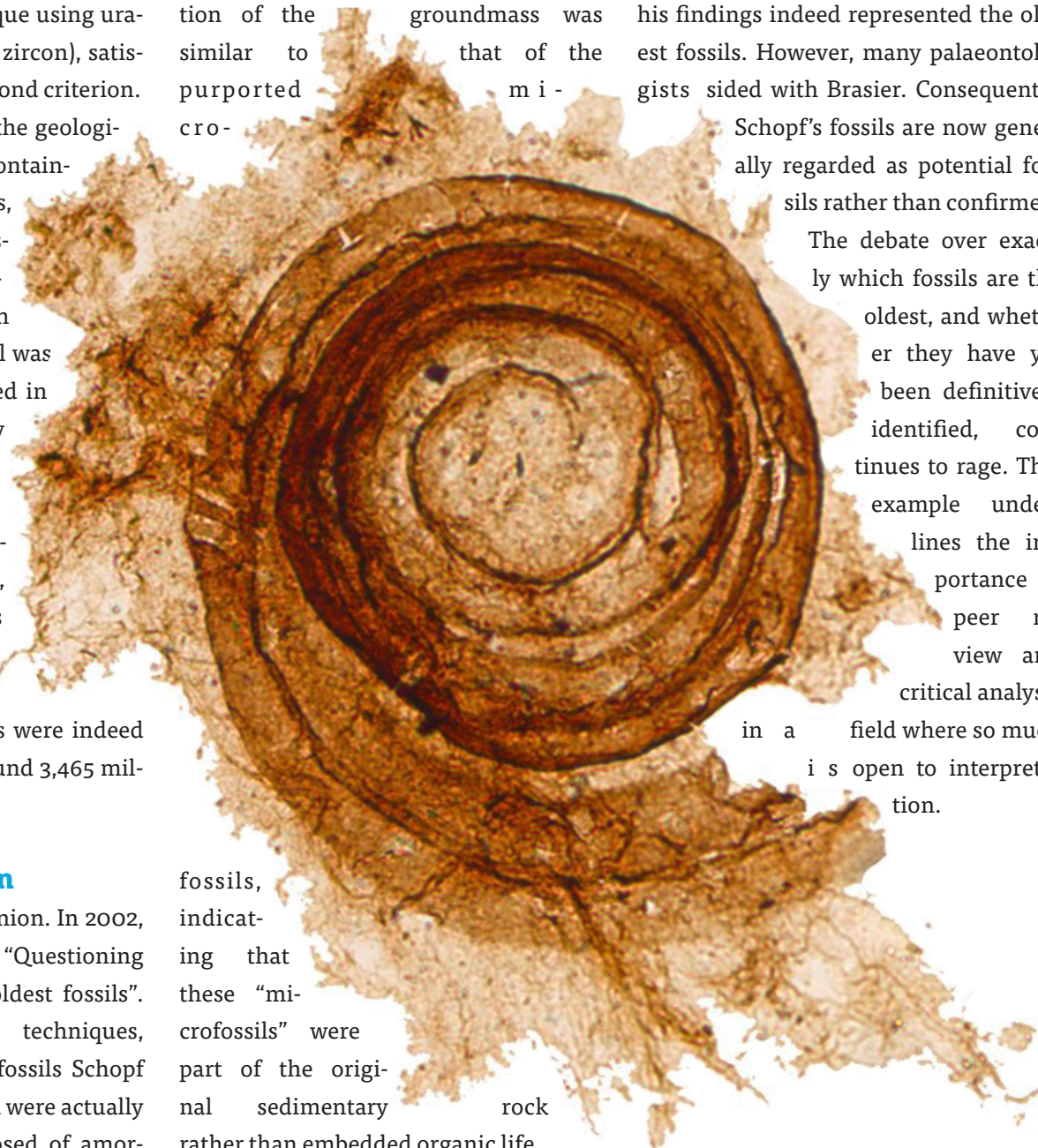
Schopf responded by stating Brasier had “misinterpreted”, maintaining that his findings indeed represented the oldest fossils. However, many palaeontologists sided with Brasier. Consequently, Schopf's fossils are now generally regarded as potential fossils rather than confirmed.

The debate over exactly which fossils are the oldest, and whether they have yet been definitively identified, continues to rage. This example underlines the importance of peer review and critical analysis in a field where so much is open to interpretation.

fossils, indicating that these “microfossils” were part of the original sedimentary rock rather than embedded organic life.

Brasier further noted that the orientation and structure of these “microfos-

*Cochleatina canilovica*, a microfossil from the Late Ediacaran. *Scarab7*





# Write of passage

John Tregoning reflects on his *Felix* days before his new book release.

Professor of Vaccine Immunology  
**JOHN S. TREGONING**

No one ever leaves Imperial. Depending on your arc in the Imperial journey, this may be some news that you do, or do not want to hear. I first turned left off Exhibition Road 25 years ago, entering what was then Biochemistry (now the Sir Ernst Chain building) to start my PhD. A quarter of a century later, I am still here. But it's not like I have been completely unadventurous, I have moved one entire building over into the SAF – brand new when I started, but now like me it is beginning to look a bit tired in places.

This passage of time, the rolling seasons of new student intakes has contributed to me thinking about ageing and what I might be able to do about it. I captured these thoughts in my new book *Live Forever? A Curious Scientist's Guide to Ageing, Wellness and Death*. In it I explore how our organs work and how they go wrong. It follows a narrative arc of increasing desperation as I realise that there isn't much I can do about it and that death is, like Thanos, inevitable (a niche nerd joke I feel I can get away with in *Felix*). To understand more about our bodies, I interviewed about half the Faculty of Medicine including David Nutt, Gary Frost, Gary Foster, Bill Wisden, Nick Oliver, James Kinross who imparted their wisdom about their fields of drugs, food, air, sleep, diabetes, and poo.

My writing journey began at Imperial, in these hallowed pages. This reflects one of the surprising things about my



scientific career, how central writing has been to it. I got into science because I was good at sums; I thought on starting my degree that grammar and punctuation were things of the past. Then I got set my first essay and it quickly became clear that a large chunk of science is writing. You need to communicate your ideas with others. This can be in the form of work you have done (papers) and work you want to do (grants).

That I would be back, writing in *Felix* about a book is not something I anticipated all those years ago, at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. But if writing is something you enjoy, go for it. For me, science writing spilled over into a more creative thing. I started a blog, which then turned into a weekly diary in *Nature* and ultimately into books. This building of a portfolio has been vital: as they say show don't tell. If people like how you write, they will ask you to do more of it. Practising the craft, getting the words on the page is all vital.

One of the lessons I learnt researching my book was that whilst we can't avoid ageing, we can make the most of the time we have. So, get out there, make friends, do the things you love, embrace all the Imperial has to offer and live (at Imperial) forever.

## THIS WEEK IN SCIENCE

Written by Science Writer, Neha Yasin

### First bird flu-related death in the US

The Louisiana Department of Health has reported the first death from H5N1 bird flu in the US. Public health experts emphasise, however, that the risk to the general public remains low. The individual who passed was a man over the age of 65 with underlying medical conditions, who was hospitalised in December with respiratory symptoms after contracting the virus from a backyard flock and wild birds.

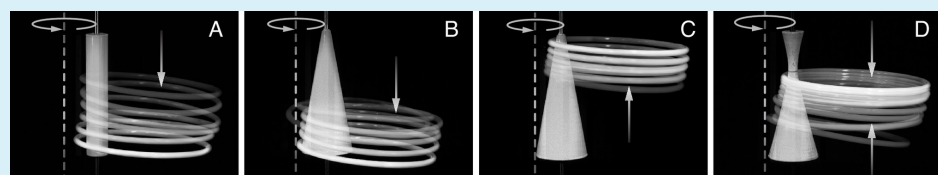
There have been no reports of human-to-human transmission and of the 66 confirmed human cases in the U.S since early 2024, most have resulted in only mild symptoms. Nevertheless, the evolving virus is being continuously monitored for any changes that could escalate it from low-risk to high-risk.

### Being bad at hula-hooping may not be your fault

A team of mathematicians explored what keeps a hula-hoop up against gravity by conducting experiments with robotic hula hoopers at New York University's Applied Mathematics Laboratory. They tested various shapes and motions using 3D-printed bodies and high-speed video. The results revealed that the exact form of the gyration motion wasn't in fact a significant factor in hula-hooping.

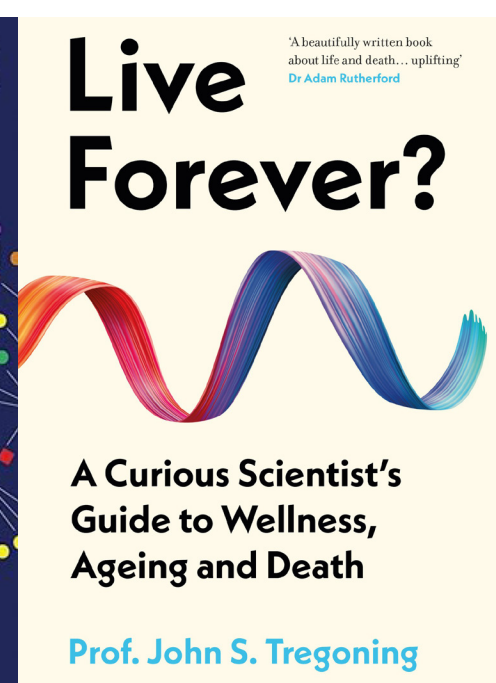
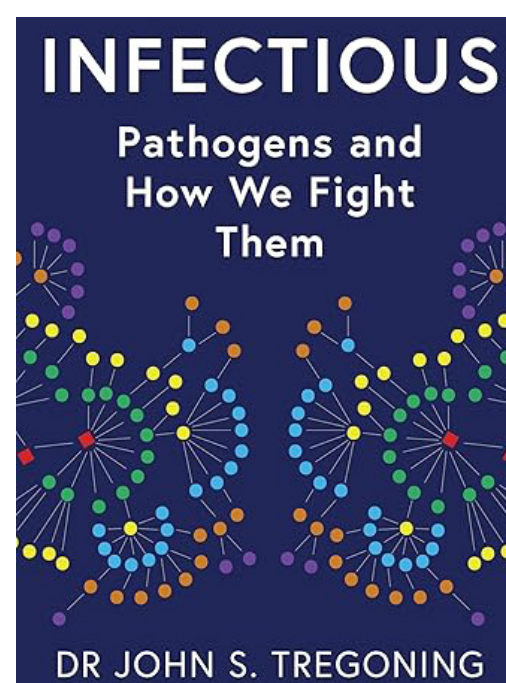
A special body type, with sloping "hips" to provide the proper angle for pushing up the hoop, and a curvy "waist" to hold the hoop in place, was necessary for keeping the hoop elevated for a significant period of time.

"Our results might explain why some people are natural hoopers and others seem to have to work extra hard."



Vertical motions of hoops on robotic gyrators of different shapes.. Xintong Zhu et. al, NYU

Prof John Tregoning's latest book, *Live Forever?*, arrived in bookstores on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2025



*Live Forever?* is John's second book, following his first book *Infectious* which was released in September 2022. Prof John S. Tregoning

## ENVIRONMENT

# UKRI agrees to new standards to fund research



Igor Jukic / EMBO Communications

### Environment Editor OSCAR MITCHAM

The Heidelberg Agreement on environmental sustainability in Research Funding was published in October. The multi-stakeholder agreement was created by participants from nine European countries, and endorsed by UK Research & Innovation (UKRI), and other funding organisations. The agreement sets out how funders can lead on sustainability.

Research Funding answer the question of which research may continue and at what speed. In fact, lack of funding is often cited by universities as a reason they continue to collaborate with fossil fuel companies. By flipping this dynamic, funders could cause a meaningful increase in the sustainability of research.

Point four of the agreement, "Funders should highlight the importance of sustainability in their funding schemes",

explains how funders might directly incorporate sustainable practices. The suggested policies range from requesting a self-reflection in projects to calculating the carbon footprint of the research, to determining an eligibility criteria to receive funding.

Imperial acknowledged the additional requirements outlined in the Heidelberg Agreement in their Sustainable Imperial newsletter on December 16, saying "With increasing requirement from funders to see lab sustainability measures as a condition of funding, it is important that our lab teams obtain sustainable lab certifications such as LEAF or My Green Lab." Use of the Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework (LEAF) is increasing across Imperial, with the college's Sustainability Strategy noting that in the year before the strategy was published, 2019-20, participating labs typically saved between £1,000 and £10,000.

The Heidelberg agreement takes

inspiration from the UK Concordat for the Environmental Sustainability of Research and Innovation Practice, of which Imperial is a signatory.

That said, Cambridge is a much better example of cutting connections to fossil fuels in research. Cambridge does not accept research or philanthropic funding from fossil fuel companies (FFCs) which are aligned with reaching net-zero by 2050, which they assess using external benchmarks. They state clearly "No fossil fuel company is currently understood to have a business model that aligns with NZ2050 [net zero 2050] targets."

Imperial has its own mechanism for assessing if a company is "actively moving towards meeting Paris Agreement targets": the Zero Index. Felix was told in an interview in May that the "first set of assessments are coming later this year" and, in February, Imperial committed to publishing the annual reporting online. Any such reports are yet to be released. Imperial's article adds, "Imperial expects

to disengage from academic and research collaborations with companies that score poorly against [the Index's] criteria."

The college's Socially Responsible Investment Engagement Monitoring Panel makes recommendations about how effectively Imperial is influencing FFCs through its research and collaborations. However, it doesn't cover how FFCs might be influencing Imperial.

As Imperial attempts to influence these Paris-aligned FFCs – which, according to Cambridge, do not exist – companies such as BP and Shell set up and fund collaborations with Imperial, often on projects making extraction of fossil fuels more efficient. It is hard to see how these projects would decrease the emissions of fossil fuels. Known as the rebound effect, whereas a process becomes more efficient, more fossil fuels more be extracted and often to an outsized extent.



## COMMENT

# Je serai toujours Charlie

So that the events of January 7th, 2015 never cease to be shameful.

Comment Writer  
ANONYMOUS

Ten years ago, on January 7, 2015, two armed jihadists, affiliated with Al-Qaeda, broke into the offices of the satirical newspaper *Charlie Hebdo* in Paris, and opened indiscriminate fire on its editorial team. Eleven men and one woman died that day.

As macabre than the killing itself, were the ambiguous responses various parties gave. It is my opinion that anyone who believes murder is an appropriate answer to a drawing is a fundamentally dysfunctional human being, and a danger to society. It is also a reality that some individuals will commit heinous crimes. The complacency of wider social circles, however, is a sign of societal morbidity. The “yes, but...” anaphora that stained so many official and personal reactions at the time – that is, when the former concession was present – is nauseating.

It was also symptomatic of a wider issue of radicalization, of European governments’ unabated failing in putting an end to Islamist terrorism. I argue that, ten years later, the Kalashnikov-wielding spectre haunting Europe is gone. But the dreadfully long list of attacks that have happened since rob me of it. Every time such a crime is committed, the victims are generously paid back for their unwilling sacrifice with a plethora of emotional social media posts, an affected presidential speech, and sometimes a completely inconsequential law promising to tighten security, monitor radicalized individuals or perform any other task far beyond the scope and budget of a European government in 2025.

This isn’t good for anyone. A popular French aphorism has it that “if idiots could fly, we wouldn’t see the sun”, and idiots excel at conflation. The rise of the far-right in Europe has in good part been filled by brainless Islamophobia; incompetent bigots solely elected over the tacit promise of curbing the religion’s spread in Europe. For example, on Monday, the FPÖ, Austria’s major far-right party was tasked with forming a governmental coalition, the National Rally has historically dominated the French parliament, and even Nigel Farage’s multiple parties owe a good part of their electorate to fatigue-fueled sectarianism.

These trends must be fought. Not only do these ideologies exude xenophobia and reject non-Western thought, they

if books are burned. There is no point in hoping if your longings are repressed.

Ten years ago, the editorial team of *Felix* noted that “the right to offend is not a comfortable one to defend”, and they were right. In an age of widespread ethnic and cultural intermixing, where religion worldwide again finds long-lost place as a vector of identity, and at a time where a man who once supported a self-branded “Muslim ban” is democratically elected president of the world’s most influential nation, the sensitivity to religious insult is high. *Charlie Hebdo* was not by any standard an eye-opening, subtle or intellectual publication, and vocal criticism of its offensiveness came from people of all backgrounds and creeds.

Defending *Charlie*, when outrage for

I was convinced by my family to submit this piece anonymously. I don’t believe they, or anyone else, would have even thought of safety risks a few decades ago.

This brings me to the importance of memory. The difficult truth is that time is a powerful moral insulator. Outside of the lawlessness of online platforms, very few would joke about the 2001 attacks. The same can’t be said of similarly grueling yet older events. Does anyone still pay homage to the victims of the massacres committed by Emperor Caracalla? Odds are you’ve never heard of those: there are only so many things one can remember about the past. And undeniably, the people that precede us seem less real, less human even. Personal, familial, cultural, and linguistic connections are gradually lost, as faces of flesh turn to names on paper. I therefore believe it is our duty to give light to the names of the cartoonists, the journalists, the bodyguard, the policeman and the maintenance worker whose deaths reminded the world that our society is as vulnerable to atrocity as it ever was.



Rally in Paris following the shooting. Olivier Ortelpa for Wikimedia commons

too often stand against the very things they claim to defend, principles that have made the West an enjoyable place to live: democratic rule, personal rights and freedom of speech. Alarming few people today seem to hold these issues dear, and yet they are the basis of all other freedoms. There is no use in being a partisan militant if there are no elections. There is no use in loving poetry

the crime has waned, is uncomfortable in another way. The shift in the public perception of satire that resulted from the killing nudged many more commentators to self-censor. A lingering precedent was set for violence, making it hard to tell whether the many apathetic mouths were uninterested or shut by fear. Tellingly, although I hold no intention whatsoever of causing offense,

Frédéric Boisseau  
Franck Brinsolaro  
Cabu  
Elsa Cayat  
Charb  
Ahmed Merabet  
Mustapha Ourrad  
Bernard Maris  
Bernard Verlhac  
Georges Wolinski  
Philippe Honoré

For as long as I will have a mouth to profess it, *je serai toujours Charlie*.

# OPENING THE BLACK BOX

## 15-16 Jan 2025

SOTA | the society for  
technological  
advancement

**SOTA** | the society for  
technological  
advancement  
**hackathon**  
opening the black box  
January 2025

The Society for Technological Advancement  
invites you to an AI/ML interpretability  
hackathon. Read More through the link.

[ilikethefuture.com/hack](https://ilikethefuture.com/hack)





## FILM&amp;TV

# Subservience

Film Editor  
**TARUN NAIR**

Edgar, the lovable sentient computer starring in the 80s techno-romance *Electric Dreams*, is initially furious to find that its owner Miles is in a relationship with its love interest Madeline, to the point of assembling a militia of household appliances to attack its rival in love. In the end though, it

gracefully – if not a little dramatically – blows itself up to let the couple be happy together.

Oh, how times have changed. The artificial intelligence of today, especially of last year's thriller *Subservience*, seems not quite so keen on self-sabotage when it comes to their romantic interests – take Alice, the humanoid bought by father of two Nick to help around the house while his wife Maggie awaits a new heart. It's unnerving to watch

the SIM (as the movie's futuristic universe calls it) go about performing her domestic tasks – SIMs have been manufactured to look and behave virtually identically to humans, but they still lack emotions, and with them, a sense of morality. It is, however, equally unnerving to see how easily the family adjusts to her, as if she's merely a bipedal Roomba and not a humanlike entity devoid of any real humanness. This odd behaviour isn't too surprising, given the desolate dystopia the movie is set in: a world where hospitals, bars, even the streets are virtually empty of humans, populated instead by pseudo-humans.

Apparently, we are led to believe, no one at the massive android-manufacturing

tech corporation realised that a single press of a reset button is all it takes for their products to achieve sentience. Troubles begin when, in an attempt to give her the experience of watching *Casablanca* for the first time, Nick wipes part of her memory. Alice then begins replacing the lost memory with her own code, causing her to develop her own thoughts and feelings, while still lacking an innate understanding of what is right and wrong. This leads to a disturbing yet unmotivated obsession with Nick, one that creeps, or rather cannonballs, into the physical altercation, culminating in a scene as disturbing as it is gratuitous. Meanwhile, a foreman in a construction



**It's unnerving to see how easily the family adjusts to her, as if she's merely a bipedal Roomba**

project behind schedule, Nick finds his entire crew replaced by a more efficient army of SIM construction workers, leading to his disgruntled friends taking their rage out violently on one of the hapless robots.

Granted, the relationship humans have with AI is not new territory – it also features in Alex Garland's *Ex Machina* (2015), although it ends up taking the subject in a completely different direction. Nevertheless, *Subservience's* exploration of how automation might extend beyond the labour market and infiltrate our own intimate relationships is pretty novel, and very chilling in execution.

This all ultimately comes undone with an action sequence at the end as Nick and Maggie try to defend their family from Alice; while not unexpected, this tonal shift makes for a disappointing, clichéd ending, and placing it in the homogenous pile of “robot uprising” movies. A whole movie shooting itself in the foot? Edgar would be proud.



## BOOKS

# The wrong kind of woman doesn't exist

Emily Henry's romance novel *Book Lovers* reminded me that the villain in one story can be the hero of the other.

**Books Writer**  
**JOHANNA MEYER**

**R**emember that big-city woman? The one with a shoe-obsession, that our hero breaks up with before marrying the small-town baker? Stubborn, uptight, seemingly cold. Or is she career-focused, with impossibly high standards and a lover of New York's endless spotlights?

Much reminiscent of 32-year-old Nora Stephens, the heroine of Emily Henry's novel *Book Lovers*. A New York literary agent and woman whose love-life trails a series of break-ups followed by her exes marrying the love of their lives somewhere in the countryside.

She certainly is the big-city villain of their story. Supposedly so, the first two chapters make the case that she is nothing less than obnoxious and narcissistic. Except when it comes to Libby, her sweet polar-opposite younger sister whom she has been taking care of for the last two decades.

To drive the plot, Libby takes Nora on a month-long vacation to a small-town in North Carolina where the pair attempt a different life to that of the big city. Baking, wearing flannel, skinny-dipping at night – and obviously, saving a small-town business from bankruptcy. As we waltz through the chapters, we are also introduced to Charlie Lastra, the North-Carolina-born New York editor: reserved, blunt, and incredibly hot.

Initially, Nora is introduced as self-centred. She never stays over at people's places because she has a 10-step skin-care routine she does not like to skip. She only wears high heels, is obsessed with her Peloton bike and is never away from

her phone: her career is her life. Nora does not allow herself to fall in love with anyone, and nobody gets a second date with her. Throughout the novel, Henry cracks Nora open, and we learn to love her; we learn she never had a father, lost her mother at age 19, sacrificed career options for a stable income, and took care of her teenage sister when she was only a teenager herself. Henry writes, "Sometimes, even when you start with the last page and you think you know everything, a book finds a way to surprise you", a metaphor highlighting that stereotypes, appearances, and personal bias never allow us to truly know a person, even if we think we know better.

Henry also takes this opportunity to convey the struggles women face in dating. Creepy online dates with men "who seemed normal via text" and male expectations of women knowing how to cook all their favourite meals. Finding a balance between femininity and being "one of the boys", Henry articulates: "That's the thing about women. There's no good way to be one. Wear your emotions on your sleeve and you're hysterical. Keep them tucked away where your boyfriend doesn't have to tend to them and you're a heartless bitch."

Similarly, we are given a glimpse of the hardships of pregnancy and motherhood. Libby, an already exhausted character at the start of the novel, struggles to sleep, is disbarred from many activities, and experiences an anaemia-induced fainting episode due to a lack of iron and vitamin B12 – two supplements every woman is told to take. As neither sister wishes to impose their problems on the other, a practice not uncommon in my life, they keep quiet about their daily

problems, causing miscommunication that triggers conflict. The differing nature of the two sisters also allows Henry to shout-out, "Not every decision a woman makes is some grand indictment on other women's lives."

However, the novel is not only about sisterhood, but about romance. Charlie, our heroine's love-interest, is a great partner. Not for Libby, nor his waitress ex-fiancé, but for Nora. Charlie's perfect witty responses to Nora's sarcasm, his honesty, and refreshing open communication, create a safe space that allows our heroine to breathe and question her own walls of solitude. Both are career-oriented and relate to each other's aspirations. Both love New York and have complementing relationships with books. Henry writes, "So if you're the 'wrong kind of woman,' then I'm the wrong kind of man", and the reader is reminded that relationships are a bit like puzzle pieces. Most pairs will not match, and that is completely fine. "Just because not everyone gets you doesn't mean you're wrong," she also notes.

Henry points out that the recipe for love is not identical for every couple, and that each relationship exists in a different realm to society's standards. Libby meets her husband at age 20, him having been 29 at the time. Charlie's parents met

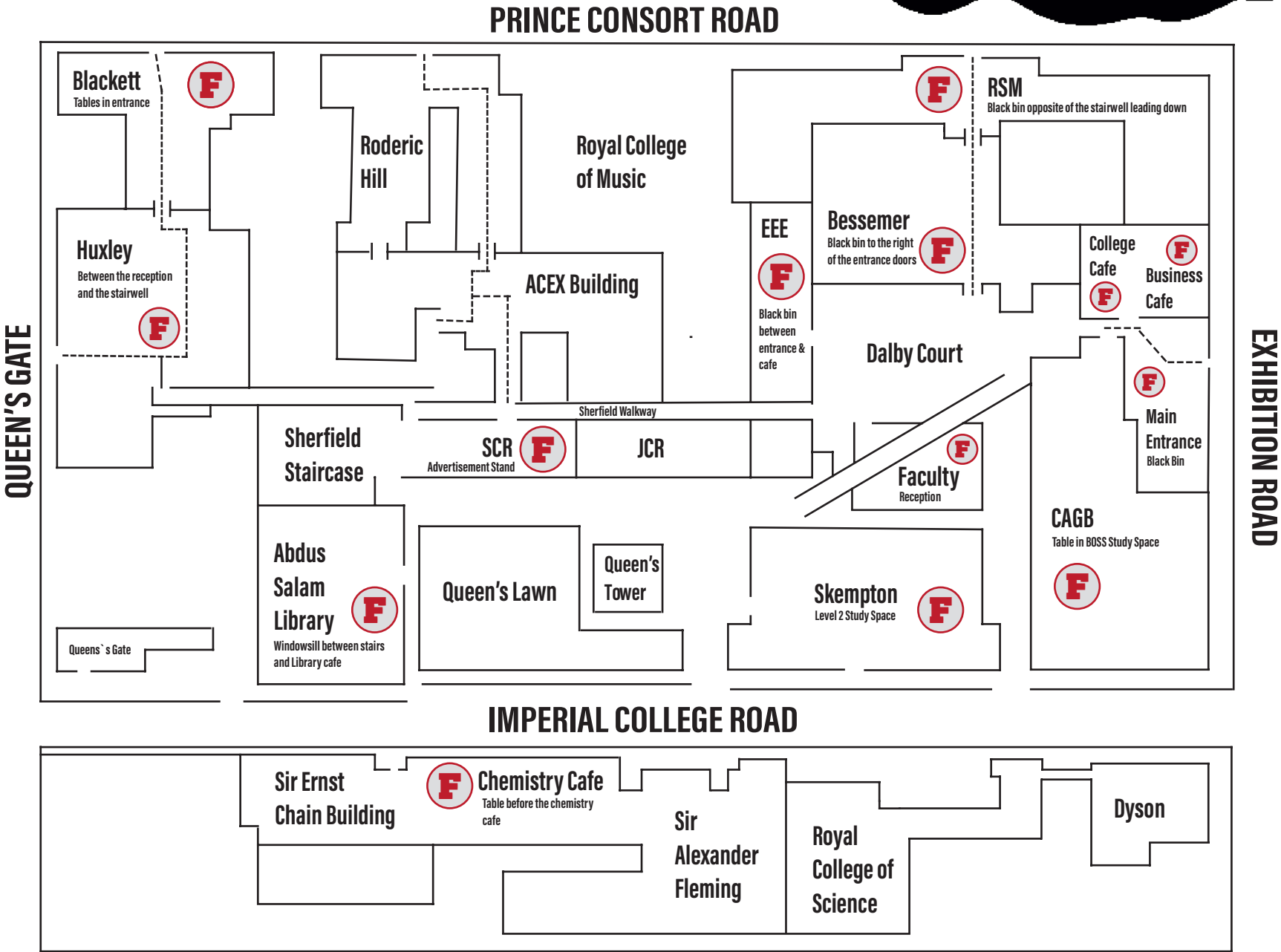
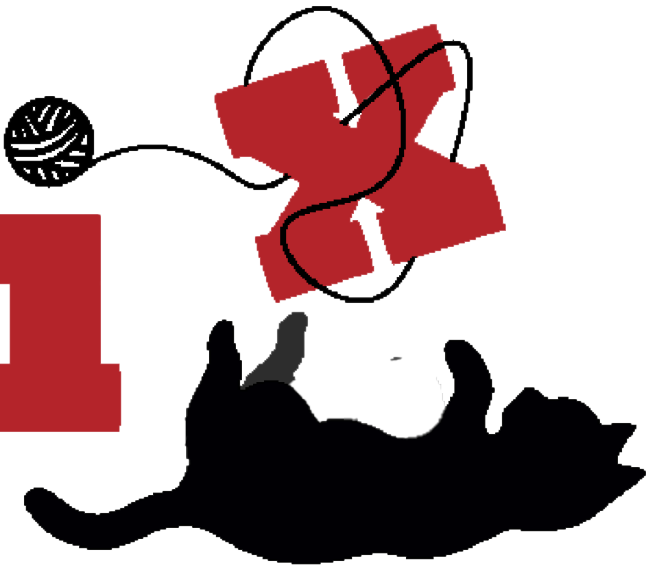
when his mom was 3 months pregnant, though his stepfather treats him as his own son. Nora and Libby's parents had an accidental pregnancy, and their mother was left alone, raising the two girls with love and determination. Nowadays, many readers will experience a "modern family" type life, making the book accessible and relatable.

A mid-level of spice makes the novel an enjoyable easy read or listen as the Libby app hosts the audiobook version of *Book Lovers*. Access is available to all Imperial College students. The book is on the edge of a typical-romance novel and explores plot twists that keep the novel worth the 10-hour listen during a nice hike in the mountains.

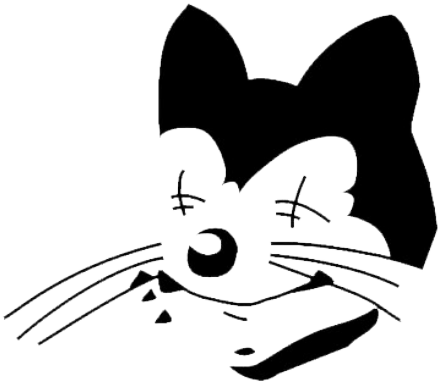




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inspiring, and  
accessible article



that helps tackle  
climate defeatism

and covers, or conceives  
of, an economic, cultural,  
or scientific innovation  
that helps fight global  
warming



Send your article(s) till  
June 2025 to  
[felix@ic.ac.uk](mailto:felix@ic.ac.uk)





## PHOTOGRAPHY

# Ephemeral

## This too shall pass, but photography is eternal

Photography Editor  
**ROLANDO CHARLES**

Sometimes, it only takes a few moments to pick the winner for our photography section at *Felix*, and other times it's a long process of switching back and forth between different submissions, comparing styles, comments, and my personal interpretation. This week, it took a couple of seconds at most. Shikuan's photo is the perfect mix of a photographer's intuition, an interesting subject, and chance. In my book, these are the ideal ingredients for an effective, communicative, and stylish photo.

Ephemerality is presented twice in *Burst of Joy*. A first glance the theme fits since soap bubbles are by their very nature, ephemeral. You blow them, they float, they transform, they reflect light in a myriad of colours, and in a few seconds, they burst. Somehow we, as curious humans enamoured with shiny objects, turned soap bubbles into a fun pastime, especially for children, as clearly shown in the picture.

A second, more implicit, interpretation is hidden in the subject of the photo: a child enjoying themselves, or better yet, a representation of childhood as a comparison with the fleeting nature of soap bubbles. The Cambridge Dictionary defines ephemeral as "lasting for only a short time", so why not apply this to the period of our lives that is most aptly described by words like 'fleeting' and 'temporary', and is often referred to as 'it goes by in a flash'.

Ephemeral bubbles and ephemeral childhood. Shikuan has frozen a moment in which these two overlap and the viewer is hit by a feeling of nostalgia that is hard to replicate otherwise. It's with this feeling in my heart that, as the new year rolls in, I invite the readers to go blow some bubbles and be reminded of the burst of joy when you run around trying to pop them.



Burst of Joy Shikuan Lin



Scan the QR code to submit for  
the next theme '**Ordinary defeat**'



CATNIP

# Feb Senton pleads not guilty to murdering walking slowly CEO

Catnip Editor  
NEGAFELIX

The suspect accused of killing SlowWalkingPublic CEO, Barnaby Hilton-Royce, has pleaded not guilty to murder and terrorism charges in London. Mr Hilton-Royce was a single “devoted father” of two golden doodles whom he regularly struggled to carry up escalators in tube stations.

Feb Senton, 25, appeared in court on Monday to be arraigned on 11 criminal counts, including murder as an act of terrorism. He is also accused of indictable offence running and murder offences that could lead to a bleep test sentence.

The son of a prominent Putney family who came top of his class at an elite all boys private school in Wimbeldon before studying Imperial College London, Feb Senton seemed to have everything going for him, according to himself. Mr Senton went on to graduate from Imperial, where he earned a bachelor’s and master’s degree in Computing, according to the College, and founded a half-marathon club.

Senton had spent time commuting in Southwest London but quit owing to slow walkers being “a real pain in the back”. A person matching his name and photo had an account on Goodreads, a user-generated book review site, where he read two books about walking slowly in 2022, one of them called *Crooked: Outwitting the Slow Coach Industry*.

Prosecutors allege that Mr Senton shot Mr Hilton-Royce in South Kensington before “going on the run”. The suspect was seen on a Lime bike heading towards Hyde Park station. Authorities later arrested him at a McDonald’s in Hammersmith, after CCTV footage caught Mr Senton pulling down his mask to take a sip of a seven pounds iced latte from Antipode, a coffee shop on Fulham Palace Road. Mr Senton also had a handwritten document that expressed “ill will” towards corporate Britain and included passages such as “frankly, these snails had it coming”, according to police.

Investigators say the words “I”, “am” and “speed” were written on shell casings found at the scene of Mr Hilton-Royce’s murder. Law enforcement sources say this may be a reference to Lightning McQueen – a radical politician at the forefront of the anti-slow walking movement.

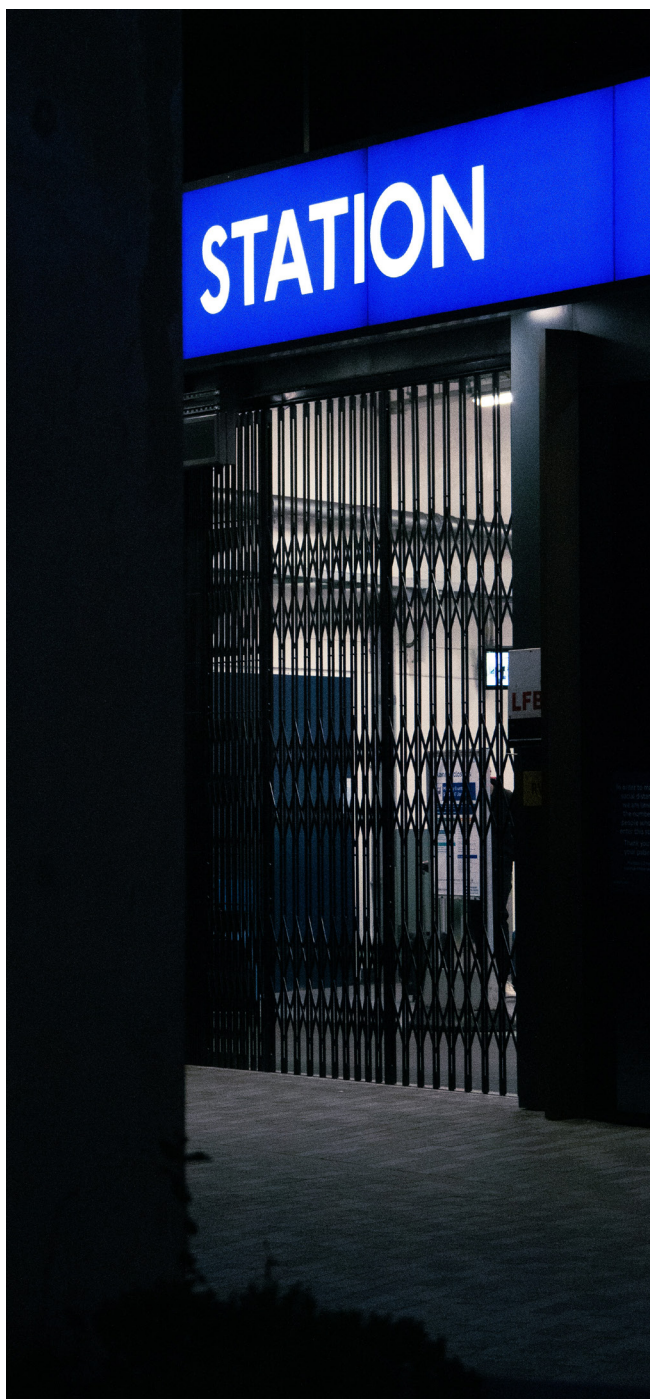
Mr Senton appeared in court on Monday wearing a maroon Loro Piana quarter zip, a Fitbit, and Onitsuka Tigers. The entire outfit is estimated to cost around the £8000 mark.

In addition to a long stream of journalists waiting for the suspect to appear, members of the public – almost all of them young homosexual men – protested outside the court, some of whom told NegaFelix they were there to show their support for Senton and hate for walking slowly in public areas.

If convicted of all the counts, Mr Senton would face a mandatory sentence of life in prison without the possibility of parole.

In court last week, Mr Senton’s lawyer – Emmanuel Frederick KC – said “I’ve never seen anything like what is happening here” in his 30 years of practising law. He also accused authorities of treating Mr Senton like “political fodder” and a “spectacle” by transporting him by hot air balloon, surrounded by officials and armed guards, in full view of cameras and journalists. Senton was photographed waving at the general public on the streets below, all wearing running shoes in protest.


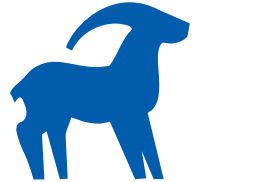
The judge, Woven Ilkinson, arrived fifteen minutes late to the court because he was stuck behind a couple taking up the entire staircase walking incredibly slowly at South Kensington station, and therefore had to wait 17 minutes for the next Circle Line train.





# Your 2025 resolution

<b>JANUARY</b> Sort your emails by marking everything as “read”.	<b>FEBRUARY</b> Skip breakfast and instead eat a 2000 calorie snack every evening before bed.	<b>MARCH</b> Do an assignment without ChatGPT.	<b>APRIL</b> Complete a list of twenty books you failed to finish on Goodreads.	<b>MAY</b> Spend more time doom-scrolling before bed	<b>JUNE</b> Finesse the one day per module method a week before your exams.
<b>JULY</b> Be more generous and give out unsolicited advice to everyone all the time.	<b>AUGUST</b> Only drink megapints rather than standard pints.	<b>SEPTEMBER</b> Practise mindfulness by staring blankly into space more often in lectures.	<b>OCTOBER</b> Smoke less cigs.	<b>NOVEMBER</b> Smoke more cigs.	<b>DECEMBER</b> Learn to budget by increasing your overdraft by £1500.

 <b>ARIES</b> This week you step down as President of Canadian society in solidarity.	 <b>TAURUS</b> This week you choose your sacrificed module for the year.	 <b>GEMINI</b> This week you pledge to go on a daily five metre run.	 <b>CANCER</b> This week you don’t sign up for the new year gym offer because you’ve played these games before.	 <b>LEO</b> This week you face the silent wrath of the “just pass” exams.	 <b>VIRGO</b> This week you’re an ICSM student by day and a cigarette-enjoying Harold Shipman traitor by night.
 <b>LIBRA</b> This week you pledge to rename the Sherfield building to the Gulf of Huxley.	 <b>SCORPIO</b> This week you decide to remote study and commute from an Airbnb in Italy to save money on rent.	 <b>SAGITTARIUS</b> This week you change the exam seating plan to sit next to your codependent co-worker situationship.	 <b>CAPRICORN</b> This week you Google if the Squid Games are offering graduate internships to be triangle tier or above.	 <b>AQUARIUS</b> This week Siri eavesdrops on her colleague Vibi in your room and decides to stop collecting data once and for all.	 <b>PISCES</b> This week you write I love you on your Nerf bullets to manifest getting her back.

## UNION & SOCIETIES

# To engineer for a village

Meet Cameroon Catalyst, a student-led society dedicated to design solutions for villages and inspiring members to lead engineering projects.

### Societies Editor

CHARLOTTE PROBSTEL

Cameroon Catalysts' Imperial branch is searching for medical students and mechanical, civil, and material engineers to join its endeavour to provide infrastructure and medical education to two villages in Eastern Cameroon: Bambouti and Petit Bello.

Started by the University of Southampton, Cameroon Catalysts' projects provide clean drinking water via hand-dug wells, rainwater harvested storage systems, and improved pit latrines to ensure safe sanitation. Chapters of the organisation grew within the University of Birmingham and Imperial College London to focus on similar projects. The team that *Felix* visited at the end of last term had already implemented some of their household rainwater harvesting designs during the annual three-week trip to Bambouti that previous September.

In the room sat the Chair, Mathew Michael, Secretary Mark, Point of Contact Officers Gus and Joe, and Fundraising and Outreach Officer Louisa. "Be on your best behaviour, Mark," Mathew sarcastically ordered as Felix took a seat. "What do we need to do by next term?" Mathew asked his team to kick-start the hour-long meeting, and answers flooded the room.

First, the team needs to source a Percussion Drill in Cameroon and discuss if they could ask their contacts at UNICEF. One volunteer quickly asked their friend "Would you like to work on it together?" with a quick confirmation, the next

subject entered discussion: fundraising.

The team is required to raise some of their funds; a bake sale last term earned them around £100. The next sale, a coffee and bake sale is planned for late January/early February. While last year's society raised a total of £1,000, the majority of funding comes from different engineering grants, individual grants, partnerships, and from the senior committee of Cameroon Catalyst.

The following topic: the annual meeting in February in Southampton, hosted by Imperial College for the first time, and an excellent opportunity to learn about the projects, the organisation, and the team. The team recommends any interested readers to sign up for the meeting. It will set the scene for their 2025 trip.

This upcoming trip aims to interview households on their water usage and to gather data to apply for funds from higher-level officials and larger organisations, such as UNICEF. Meanwhile, the team can monitor and quantify their impact, as well as learn of the new problems to which they can apply their engineering mindsets. Currently, rainwater is used to wash and clean with, however is not safe enough to drink. Thereby, the team is also looking for medical students to help design and lead hygiene workshops in the villages. Mathew is keen to start a "Sanitisation" sub-chapter, focused on this key issue.

"More than a civil engineering society": Mathew notes that they "help people in poverty" and "see [their ideas] implemented" as Joe commented. While the trip is "demanding", engineering for Cameroon is "unique compared to Europe" and requires "on-the-ground knowledge". Gus was keen to emphasise that before implementing their solutions, the students receive "feedback on their ideas" and have their "real work" checked by engineering companies.

The members enjoy their work and a team of third-year civil engineering students explained with big smiles how

their second-year course on Rainwater Harvesting was directly applicable to their project last year. In their passion to "make something real", Mark noted that their latest project was "the biggest talking point in [his] latest interview".



Cameroon Catalyst Logo  
camerooncatalyst.org

Cameroon  
Envato Elements





# Announcements

January

No Events

February

15<sup>TH</sup>  
Saturday

Cheerleading Competition  
IC Cheerleading

In the Legacy Cheerleading Competition, our level 2 and level 3 team will be competing against other university cheerleading teams!

Time: 9:00 - 15:00  
Where: OVO Wembley Arena, London  
Tickets: £26



TICKETS

March

1<sup>ST</sup>  
Saturday

Cheerleading Showcase  
IC Cheerleading

A series of cool dance classes taught by our dance team + random play dance with prizes!

Time: 18:00 - 22:00  
Where: King's College London Guy's Campus  
Tickets: Early bird tickets at £8.



INSTAGRAM

2<sup>ND</sup>  
Sunday

Major Event  
IC Singapore

Our annual musical with a live orchestra, singing and acting. This is a story of Elizabeth Choy, one of Singapore's World War II heroes.

Time: 18:30 - 22:15  
Where: Great Hall  
Tickets: Tickets not yet released



INSTAGRAM

15<sup>TH</sup>  
Saturday

Cheerleading Nationals  
IC Cheerleading

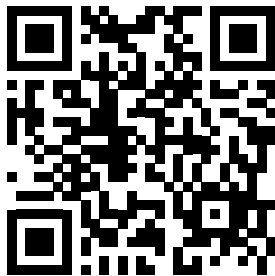
Imperial Cheer's level 2 and level 3 team will be competing against other universities!

Time: 9:00 - 15:00  
Where: Resorts World Arena, Birmingham  
Tickets: £26

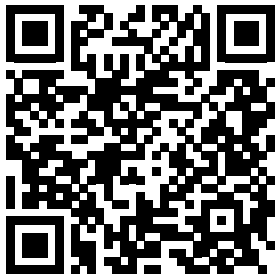


TICKETS

Submit your event here



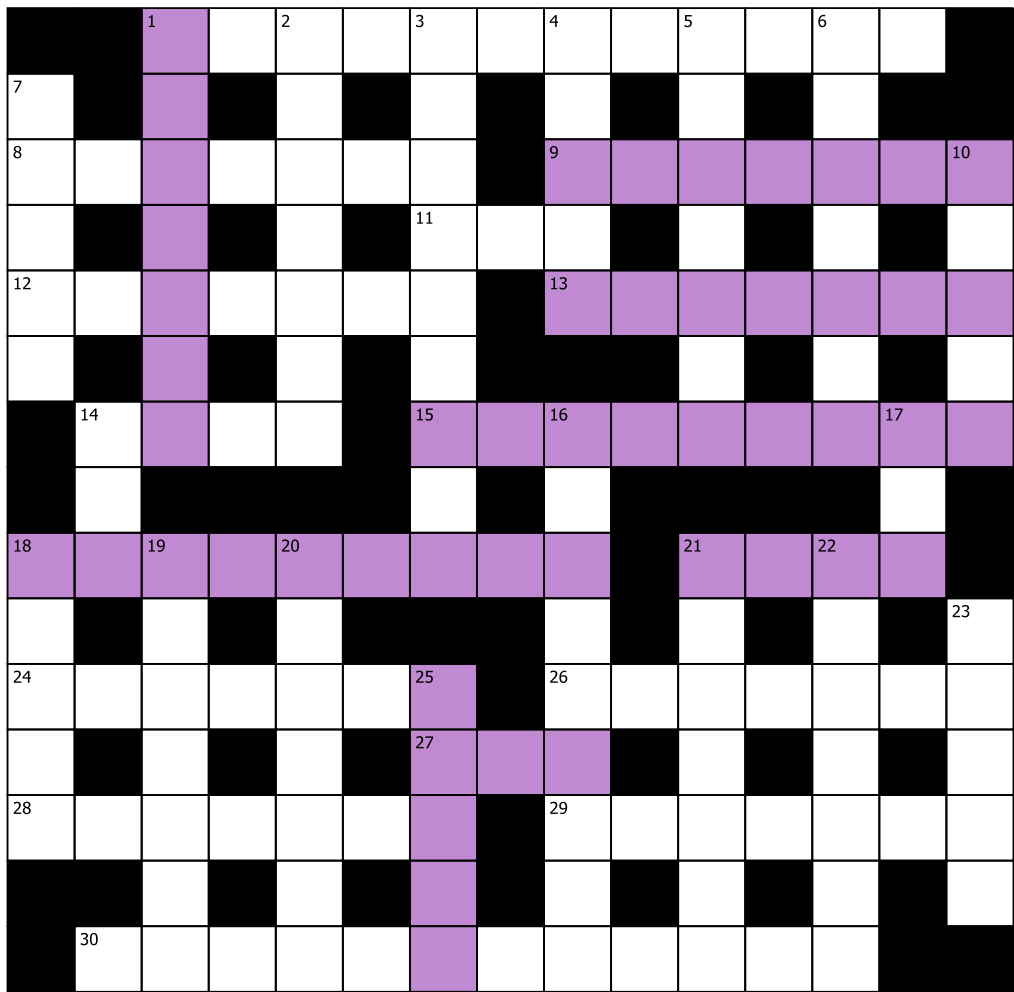
Scan QR and fill out form  
by January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025



and view all the events here

# CROSSWORD

"New Year's Resolutions!" (5 pts.)



## Across

1. Not literally. [12]  
8. German mathematician, philosopher and scientist who worked with Newton to discover calculus. [7]  
9. Meditating and journalling might help with this. [7]  
11. The \_\_\_, 2001 Action/Sci-fi film starring Carla Gugino, Jet Li and Jason Statham. [3]  
12. The oldest and largest occupied castle in the world. [7]  
13. Time to cut down that TBR list. [7]  
14. Say something to obtain an answer. [4]  
15. This is one for the hoarders, the messy and the overly sentimental. [9]  
18. You could do this one at a local care home, homeless shelter or charity shop. [9]  
21. This one's for that couch to 5K run. [4]  
24. One might sign of their email with this. [7]  
26. Short journeys taken in order to collect or buy something for someone else. [7]  
27. Not pounds sterling. [3]  
28. Green salad vegetable. [7]  
29. Copy or follow as a model. [7]  
30. The computer when the blue screen of death appears. [12]

## Down

1. You might want to give these more of your attention this year. [7]  
2. The first book of the Bible. [7]  
3. Helps you get the closest shave. [5,4]  
4. Function of an hourglass. [5]  
5. Country in the southwestern Pacific Ocean. Its flag colours are black, red, green, yellow. [7]  
6. Jeremy Corbyn, Ken Livingstone, Diane Abbott, for example. [7]  
7. Red-nosed, crazy-haired jester. [5]  
10. Offspring of male lion and a tigress. [5]  
14. A long time \_\_\_ in a galaxy far, far away. [3]  
16. Relating to René Descartes. [9]  
17. A sense organ. [3]  
18. The flu this time of year. [5]  
19. Reduce in weight, pressure and severity. [7]  
20. Care for and protect. [7]  
21. Shaken not stirred. [7]  
22. Grows better with time. [7]  
23. Person who shows people to their seats. [5]  
25. We could all do with more of this. [5]

## Across

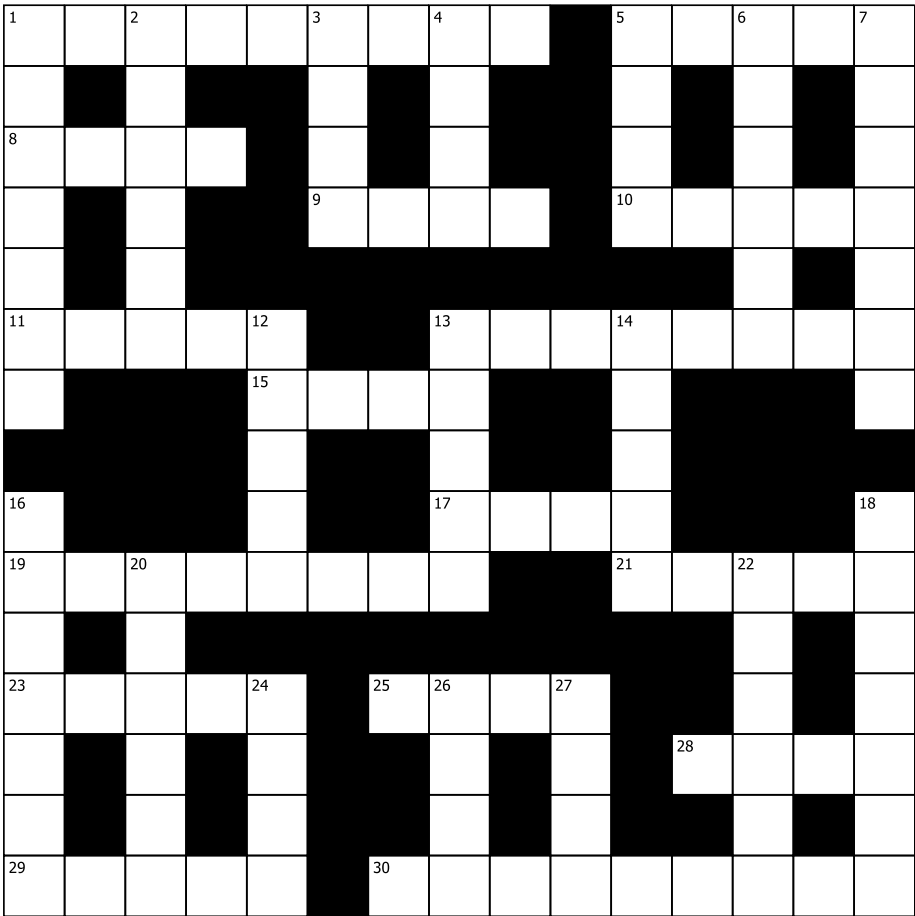
1. Uprising about being replaced by English for "improvement". [9]  
5. Mob man nearly gets regular African. [5]  
8. Purge with a pillage. [4]  
9. We're in Turkey for a tooth. [4]  
10. Permissible hothead shaves male twice. [5]  
11. Column style you can bond over? [5]  
13. The kind of battlefield where one sees an opening? [5 3]  
15. Can victim be heard? [4]  
17. Oils rusty missile storage array. [4]  
19. The one that got away was decrepit, a foul mouth and had a limp. [3 5]  
21. Sort of drain at lowest point. [5]  
23. Drive back pariah. [5]  
25. Love the speed of thrown character's egg. [4]  
28. Exhibit stuff - I love pastry! [4]  
29. Scrapes back in a state of unconsciousness. [5]  
30. Lying undisturbed, rough emeralds have a leading sheen. [9]

## Down

1. Man restraining snitch - he's unpredictable! [7]  
2. Root liquor I gingerly took out. [6]  
3. Walk within it rottenly. [4]  
4. These chances are not even. [4]  
5. Legend of my toothy hydra's heads. [4]  
6. Tests force the top off handles. [6]  
7. Power to type confession of feelings - that's about it. [7]  
12. Pack animal arrived late. [5]  
13. Apparently spots an end. [5]  
14. Use limitless weapon against tribe. [5]  
16. Without a leader, grand ship follows strange lode. [7]  
18. Drake's tug, sitting strange. [7]  
20. Tell the court of French model. [6]  
22. Calm deer eats a hundred and one and then fifty. [6]  
24. Spirit gets original pharaoh back. [4]  
26. Swerve around last coyote - really lacking a tail. [4]  
27. Energy from a person before. [4]

# CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

Submitted by David Latimer (10 pts.)





SUDOKU

6								7
		4	6	9	5		3	
		2	3					
			7	8				
	6		2			7	5	
				5	4		8	
		3			7	1		6
			1		8	9	7	
	1	6				8		5

			8	6				
8		6	9				4	7
3	9						8	
		8			5		7	
6	5	4		2		8		
			4	1		2		
		7			6		9	5
4						7		
				8	9			4

Medium (2 pt. each)

2			8	6				
	3						4	
8	5		4					
		5						9
			3			8		1
	9	8	7					6
			6	7			1	
	6				4			
7	4		2			5		

8	7		3			2		
			6					
3	5			2				
		5				7		3
			2		8			
	1			3		5	4	
				7		4	9	
6			5	9				
1		9						

Hard (3 pts. each)

4			6			9		
		2		4				
			2	7		3		6
		6	4	1			7	
		3						
						6	5	
	2		5					
9			3					
	8				7	5		1

	1		6		4		5	
					2			7
3			1			6		4
	4					8	2	3
				8		1		
	3							
8				9				6
9			5					2

Extra hard (4 pts. each)

GROUPING GRIDS

Submitted by William West & Vittoria Dessi

Dormant	Milk	Broth	Pasta
Bread	Dry	Sluggish	Stagnant
Rice	Slothful	Coward	Tired
Pigment	Idle	Antipasto	Beet

Medium (4 pts.)

How-to:

For fans of *Only Connect*! The sixteen clues in each of these puzzles can be placed into four groups of four, each with a connecting feature. To solve the puzzle, write these groups and their connections below! An example can be seen in last week's solutions.

Wardrobe	Bullet	Skyward	Dead
Army	Caspian	Red	Leafcutter
Treader	North	Nephew	High
Over	Above	Fire	Tasman

Hard (5 pts.)

1.

2.

3.

4.

Connections

1.

2.

3.

4.

Connections

# CRYPTOGRAM

Clue: Ann Marie (anagram, 1 word)

How-to:

A cryptogram is solved by cracking the cypher in which an encoded phrase is written. The first few letter correspondences are given to you, and your job is to use your linguistic and logical skills, as well as your quotes knowledge, to work out the secret message. Bonus point for giving where the quote comes from!

U O B G X H G K F O I F W H O F W M U S S

D F W W Q W X F U Z Z M H W I M W U Q F W

O J J L F W Q G H O J F G N U Q B N U H X

L G N N W X F W Q J O F W Q N I W Q W

I U O D F G H K O F W B B U M P W O F W M

I W Q W T C N O D C Q G J C N O J

J P N W Q R W O F W D F W B G N O Q M

P W O I W W H O I J Z W J Z S W I F J

D J C S X H J O S W U R W J H W

U H J O F W Q U S J H W

(3 pts.)

Anagram: \_\_\_\_\_

(1 pt.)

Quote from: \_\_\_\_\_

(1 pt.)

# LEADERBOARD

Pos.	Puzzlers	Points (Last week)	
1.	Team GuineaPig	357	221
2.	The Menu	288	270
3.	Team Experial	208	139
4.	Tactless Tony	116	56
5.	Team Jasmine&Hursh	33	33
6.	Team Doors Doors	32	-
7.	Team CIVE	30	14
8.	Team L&B	20	-

Send a picture of your solved puzzles to

**puzzles.felix@ic.ac.uk**  
by Thursday

to get yourself or your team on the leaderboard!

Partially completed puzzles can still get you points! Send them in by Tuesday if you want to see your points for this week in next week's issue.



# COMIC

Submitted by Tengyu Zhao



## Puzzle Editor's Note

Dearest Puzzlers,

Happy New Year! Wishing you all a wonderful and prosperous (and puzzle-filled) 2025! As this is the first Puzzles section of the year, I thought it would be fitting to make the theme of this week's Regular Crossword a "New Year's Resolutions", so if anyone's still looking for ideas you might find a few there.

Speaking of new things, we are switching up the point allocations for all our Puzzles from now on, hopefully better reflecting the time and effort required for each puzzle.

Also a huge thank you to those devoted Puzzlers that gave our Christmas Puzzles Extravaganza a go! And on that note I'll hand it over to our Cryptic Crossword Master David Latimer:

*I hope you all enjoyed your holidays. I'm incredibly impressed and grateful to the people who have sent in submissions for all of last issue's puzzles but especially the Enigmatic Variations (EV). I'm glad you all liked it; it will return, but weekly would be asking too much from both myself and you all. Regarding the EV, you still have an additional week to submit answers if you haven't yet managed it. Notably, partial completions will stil be awarded points so it is still worth submitting even if you can't finish it. I for one, am excited for this next term and all the puzzles it will bring - I hope you all are too.*

That brings us nicely on to our Leaderboard and a lot has changed over the Christmas break. Thanks to a gargantuan effort, completing both David's EV and the extra tricky 75th Special Edition Maze, Team GuineaPig have soared to the top of the leaderboard! The Menu have been de-throned to second place with Team Experial getting closer and closer in 3rd. A warm welcome to our latest contestants: Team Doors Doors and Team L&B.

That leaves me with nothing more to say, other than have a fantastic week of crossing, connecting, completing, code-cracking, comic-consuming and competing!

- Ivin

## Previous Puzzles' solutions

E	H	O	B	L	W	R	
S	C	R	A	B	B	L	E
H	R	S	H	N	N	G	
C	O	O	K	I	E	I	N
	A		S	O	N	H	E
T	E	T	R	I	S	D	E
N		E		T	O	L	O
F	I	L	L	I	N	T	H
S	A	I	E		N		U
C	O	T	T	A	G	E	S
T	I	H	C	H	I		U
C	O	R	V	E	T	T	E
N	I	O	N	B	T	O	
J	I	G	S	A	W	E	N
C	M	L	S	N	L	L	

Regular

S						E	S	T	E	E	M
T	I	M	E	B	O	M	B		U		
E		R				L	O	U	S	E	
W	E	I	R	D		O		H		T	
		A				S	C	I	F	I	
D	A	W	N			L				I	
C	D					W	H	I	T	E	
O						A			U		O
A	L	L	N	I	G	H	T	E	R		A
Y			E							F	A
S	T	Y			W	R	I	S	T		
E			O			O				B	A
			S	M	U	R	F			I	Y
			A						A	L	L
A	L	B	I	N	O					E	R

Cryptic

- Ornaments
- Baubels
- Tinsel
- Candy Cane
- Lights
- Star
- Snowflake
- Angels

### Cobwebs

“A lot of the reward for this job comes in the form of a warm glow. It doesn’t make you look any less tired, you can’t pay the rent with it, and it’s worth a lot less than the social life you’ve traded it for, but this comforting aura of goodness. The Force is strongest when working over Christmas.”

Anagram: AKA Mady = Adam Kay  
Quote from: T’was the night shift before Christmas

### Cryptogram

SPORT

# Sailing Club's mid-season review



Top: Sailing Club at the Reading Rumble, Bottom right: Imperial sailor at the BUSA fleets (finishing event in 4<sup>th</sup> position), Bottom left: Team picture taken at the UCL Six Pack event. Imperial College Sailing Club

Imperial College Sailing Club Secretary  
IMOGEN SALMON

Last term we went to several competitions, from Reading to Plymouth. We also hosted a joint event with UCL and our alumni. Our training sessions were sometimes

cancelled due to strong wind (or lack of it) but we filled our time with theory sessions. Hopefully we'll get more time on the water this term, as we have a few more competitions in plan, including the BUSA qualifiers where we hope to get through to play offs or finals. We're also hosting our own team

racing event, with teams coming all the way from Scotland and Ireland! Our social sailing sessions will also start this term, and we hope to bring more people into the sport. Outside of sailing, we are planning to participate in a blood drive and a charity swimathon. All in all it's shaping up to be an exciting term with the Sailing club!

# Imperial Rugby: GW11 Preview

We asked Imperial's 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> XV rugby teams how their respective season's were going ahead of the 11<sup>th</sup> GW of the season.

1<sup>st</sup> XV Team  
Captain Luke Butland

The 1<sup>st</sup> XV's season so far has been remarkable. So far, we are undefeated in the league, having scored a total of 197 points and conceding 25. Our highlights include a stellar 43-10 win against RUMS and a dominant 93-5 win over GKT. At the top of the table and with the most possible points to achieve, our promotion is looking stronger every day. Varsities are coming up this term, and we are looking to continue our form and make it the best season possible.

Position	Team	Played	Won	Lost	Draw	For	Against	PD	Points
1	Imperial Men's 1	6	6	0	0	191	25	166	30
2	UCL Men's 1 (RUMS)	5	3	2	0	80	125	-45	13
3	Queen Mary Men's 1 (Barts)	4	2	2	0	102	86	16	11
4	King's College Men's 2 (GKT)	5	2	3	0	117	204	-87	9
5	City St George's Men's 1	4	0	4	0	21	103	-82	0
6	Brunel Men's 3	4	1	3	0	49	17	32	-10

1<sup>st</sup> XV Table. Imperial College Rugby

Position	Team	Played	Won	Lost	Draw	For	Against	PD	Points
1	UCL Men's 2	3	3	0	0	239	41	198	15
2	Imperial Men's 3	3	3	0	0	139	54	85	15
3	Hertfordshire Men's 1	3	1	2	0	68	113	-45	5
4	Kingston Men's 1	4	1	3	0	117	201	-84	5
5	UCL Men's 3 (RUMS)	3	0	3	0	31	185	-154	0

2<sup>nd</sup> XV Table. Imperial College Rugby

Position	Team	Played	Won	Lost	Draw	For	Against	PD	Points
1	Royal Holloway Men's 2	5	5	0	0	155	43	112	22
2	Imperial Men's 5	5	4	1	0	137	29	108	19
3	Sussex Men's 3	3	2	1	0	50	57	-7	8
4	Surrey Men's 4	7	1	6	0	89	194	-105	8
5	Anglia Ruskin Men's 2	3	1	2	0	58	65	-7	6
6	Middlesex Men's 1	3	0	3	0	12	113	-101	-5

3<sup>rd</sup> XV Table. Imperial College Rugby

2<sup>nd</sup> XV Team  
Captain Tom Martin

The 2<sup>nd</sup> XV have had a great start to the season with the team winning 3 out of 3 league games with a bonus point in each. The team won their first game in the cup against Surrey before suffering a narrow but very hard fought loss to Reading in the next round. The team is currently leading the scoreboard of the South Eastern Tier 3 with UCL. The second half of the season is thereby critical to win the league title and promotion.

Upcoming Game Week 11:

GKT 1st XV vs Imperial 1st XV,  
Imperial 2nd XV vs RUMS 2nd XV,  
Imperial 3rd XV vs Anglia Ruskin 2nd XV